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Hours: 9a-12p, 1:30p-5p Mon—Thurs

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LUCY'S STORY



LUCY APPROVED FOR RELIEF

Lucy was born in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. In 2008, gangsters entered her home and murdered her brother in front of the entire family, shooting him 20 times without saying a word. By August 2014, the gang violence in San Pedro Sula had reached unendurable levels. Lucy hoped to join relatives living legally in the U.S. During her journey, she and several other immigrants were kidnapped by a criminal group and taken to a house in Reynosa, Mexico where she was imprisoned for 2 months. In November 2014, Lucy's captors crossed her into the U.S., and effectively sold her to a woman named Inez near McAllen, TX.

For 6 months, Lucy was forced to care for the Inez and her young daughter without having any of her own basic necessities met. She slept on the floor of a very small space in the back of the house and was fed one egg and water every day. She was only allowed to bathe once a week and was not given any blankets or warm clothing. Lucy became very ill, but was never offered medical care. She dared not escape as Inez had installed an alarm on the house's only door and threatened to call the police or Border Patrol if she tried to leave.



Lucy finally escaped the house in March 2015 when Inez and her daughter were distracted. She stopped at a nearby store where a man offered to give her a ride. Desperate to leave, Lucy agreed and rode with him for approximately an hour before he dropped her off under a tree and told her to wait for a guide. The Border Patrol arrived shortly after.

Lucy was arrested and transferred to the T. Don Hutto detention center in early April 2015. Due to the trauma she suffered, Lucy struggled with memory loss and would lose her train of thought mid-sentence. When she struggled to tell her deportation officers what had happened to her they became frustrated and verbally abusive.

In May 2015, Lucy attended our weekly "Know-Your-Rights" presentation at Hutto, and she came forward for assistance. Thanks to staff attorney, Clarissa Bejarano, Lucy was released from detention and her application for relief was approved in early March 2016. She is now working to overcome her trauma and has become a more cheerful, hopeful person. She is currently living in Austin and has enrolled in English classes. She hopes to learn the language, get a GED and enroll in college as soon as she can.

